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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/31/2018
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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ARROYO NAMES NEW NAVAL CHIEF

Classified By: Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo approved the designation of Rear Admiral Ferdinand Golez as the new Flag Officer-in-Command for the Philippine Navy, effective August 2. The appointment was announced by Secretary of National Defense Gilberto Teodoro July 29. Golez will replace Vice Admiral Rogelio Calunsag, who is reaching the compulsory retirement age of 56. Teodoro and the Armed Forces of the Philippines Board of Generals had recommended Golez, along with two other candidates -- Rear Admiral Emilio Marayag and Rear Admiral Geronimo Defensor -- to President Arroyo for consideration as Naval Chief. All three belong to the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1976, many of which are now in key positions in the military, including Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces General Alexander Yano.

¶2. (C) Admiral Golez is currently the Commander of the Naval Education and Training Command of the Philippine Navy. He is well-known to the Mission and has visited U.S. Naval ships, including a submarine and the USNS MERCY, at the invitation of the Mission several times in the last year. He is a thoughtful pro-U.S. officer with significant exposure to the U.S. military through training courses and personal contact. Golez is expected to serve as Navy Chief until May 16, 2010, when he reaches mandatory retirement age of 56.

¶3. (C) Remarking on his appointment, Golez said he would pursue greater interoperability between the Philippine Navy and Marine Corps through the Fleet-Marine concept, which will strengthen the Philippines' ability to project force throughout the archipelago. He also stressed his intent to lead by example and the need to develop the Navy's human capital with training and more advanced equipment, while at the same time actively pressing for capability upgrades to the fleet.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: Golez is seen by some in the Philippine government as an interesting choice to be Navy Chief. He is the brother of Philippine Congressman Roilo Golez, a former National Security Adviser to President Arroyo, and now a fierce critic of her administration. Despite his political connections, military insiders claim his appointment over two other candidates who appeared to be the top contenders is further evidence of Armed Forces Chief Alexander Yano's commitment to uphold meritocracy in promotions. END COMMENT.

BIOGRAPHIC NOTES ON ADMIRAL GOLEZ

¶5. (U) Prior to his present position at the Naval Education and Training Command, Admiral Golez held the following

significant assignments: Assistant Chief for Intelligence and concurrent Commander of the Naval Intelligence and Security Force; Assistant Chief of Naval Staff for Operations; Commander, Patrol Force, Philippine Fleet; Commander, Naval Forces Southern Luzon; and Commander, Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao.

¶16. (C) Admiral Golez has undergone various military education and training, including: the Naval Command Course at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island; the Psychological Operations Course at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare School in Fort Bragg, North Carolina; the Royal Australian Navy Staff Course; and the Philippine Naval Command and Staff Course. He is the recipient of various military awards, decorations, and commendations including four Distinguished Service Stars, one Outstanding Achievement Medal, and one Distinguished Navy Cross.

¶17. (U) PERSONAL DATA: Admiral Golez is married to the former Shirley Mamaril. They have a daughter and two sons, one of whom is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Class of 2003.

¶18. (U) EDUCATION: Philippine Military Academy, Class of 1976; Ateneo de Manila School of Business, Masters in Business Administration; Queensland University of Technology in Australia, Certificate in Business Management.

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